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SPECIAL REMINDERS

- ❖ All-Collaborative Call: Sept. 8, 1 p.m. EDT
(Call-in Number: (866) 352-2112; Code: 8379893#)
- ❖ Senior Leader Call: Sept. 22, 1 p.m. EDT
(Call-in Number: (800) 410-3590; Code: 6280207#)
- ❖ Learning Session Two: Oct. 28-29, Anaheim, Calif.



Catawba Builders

Team Spotlight: Catawba Builders

We are pleased to introduce the Catawba Builders as this month's featured team. They have been building up quite a stock of small tests of change. Their team consists of Senior Leaders Cyndy Benson and Beth Brandes, Day to Day Manager Katie Turk, Supervisor Pam Brooks, Social Worker Jason Hughes, Birth Parent Yvette Somerville, Youth Steven Parker, Community Partner Jennifer McCracken, and Site-Specific Members Michele Francois and Heather Ball. Recently the team posted the following PDSA (Plan-Do-Study-Act) that was very rich in learning. The worker tried the first cycle with a "youth information sheet" he had created. The youth, however, created an "in your own words" document for the second cycle, which was more youth user-friendly. (Please see the extranet for both documents.)

PDSA Title: Youth Input During Assessment

Plan: What are we going to do? (What is the <i>change</i> being tested?)	Use the "Youth Information Sheet" in an interview with a youth during an investigation/assessment. The youth can complete the form on his or her own by writing the answers or the youth can complete the form with his or her social worker by answering the questions verbally.
<i>Who</i> is going to do it?	Steven, Jason and a family
<i>When</i> will it be done?	Steven will develop questions by 6/27/08; Jason will test by 7/3/08.
Hypothesis (what do we expect to happen?)	We will gain more information and insight into the case and into what may best serve the youth. The youth will also be given a "voice."
Do: What happened?	Steven developed questions for youth involved in an investigation to help engage the youth. Jason, the social worker, gave the questions to a youth in a new case. The youth answered the questions but felt that the questions were not particularly helpful. However, he did not mind answering them.
Study: Did what we expect to happen actually happen? What was different from what we expected? What did we learn?	We expected that the questions would help engage the youth and give the youth a voice. In this case, the youth indicated that he did not feel the questions were that helpful. However, the youth may still have felt empowered because the social worker wanted to learn more about him, even though he did not verbalize this to the social worker.
Act: What learnings will we apply to our next PDSA cycle? What will be our next PDSA?	In our next cycle, we will modify the questions, with Steven's help. Then Jason will test our modified questions on a new case.

PDSA "Study" and the Monthly Measures

By: Stacie Hanson, Project Associate

PDSAs are small, rapid tests of change. These tests should be small enough to occur before "next Tuesday," and your "study" should be completed soon thereafter. When completing the study portion of a PDSA cycle, you're examining that one small test of change – what worked and what didn't? What can we change for the next cycle?

Your monthly measures, however, are tracking broader systemic change *over time*. Each monthly measure should encompass or sample from your entire target population, not just the families that may be a part of a PDSA that month. The goal of the Breakthrough Series Collaborative is to watch your monthly measures improve over time, as successful PDSAs are spread throughout the agency. Monthly measures are meant to demonstrate the systemic effects of your PDSAs and BSC project, but they should not be used to study the outcomes of a single PDSA cycle.

Faculty member Maryam Fatemi shared an example from a past BSC in which a single PDSA was spread throughout the agency and ultimately impacted their agency's outcome data. The Pomona office struggled with inputting and tracking educational data for children in their care. A worker tested a PDSA to develop a successful protocol for entering educational data into their SACWIS, and this protocol was eventually spread to the entire office. Because of this change, their educational data changed dramatically. In August 2007, Pomona tracked the enrollment information for only **3 percent** of its children. By January 2008, enrollment information was available for **90 percent**. This change will allow caseworkers to better identify and meet the educational needs of kids in care.

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What in the World Is a "2nd Cycle" PDSA?

By Jen Agosti and Susan Dougherty
Model for Improvement Advisors

So you've done your "Plan," "Do" and "Study" and now you're working on the "Act/Adjust" part. What does this really mean? How do you know if you're doing a "real" second-, third- or fourth-cycle PDSA and why does it matter?

Moving from Cycle 1 to Cycle 2 can be confusing. Here is a quick checklist you can use to make sure you're carrying out your PDSAs in ways that allow you to apply your learning to your next test -- as well as continuing to move your successes systematically toward full implementation.

- The key area of practice in which you're focusing your test remains consistent from cycle to cycle. (If it does not, this is likely a brand new PDSA rather than a next cycle.)
- The test is taking what you learned from the previous test and *directly* applying it by re-testing something similar.
- The test is being done with more testers, with a wider audience or with a slightly different audience than your previous test.
- You are gaining buy-in from more and more staff and/or families as you go.
- The test is becoming more systematic -- it is no longer dependent on just one person. It is starting to feel like a structured process.
- It is beginning to look more like a "way of doing practice" than a single, tiny isolated test.

In addition to creating learnings that can be applied to your next cycle, each PDSA cycle also generates ideas for entirely new PDSAs. As you continue to move your PDSA through multiple cycles until you reach implementation, make sure you keep track of these new ideas for PDSAs as well!

Want some practice? We've posted a cycle-one PDSA on the extranet using the team name "Faculty" under the "Practice/Requisite" area of "3.Tools." Along with that, we've posted a question about creating a second cycle for that PDSA on the "Key Area 3: Using Safety and Risk Assessment Tools" discussion board. Please join the discussion about what a second-cycle PDSA might look like!

Did Someone Say Assistance?

A PDSA assistance call was held on July 25. The Southwest Thunderbirds, Rocky Mountain Families, Think FAST, Fresno Fuel and the Rays of Change were all present on this call. The call provided teams with the opportunity to:

- Receive a refresher on the Model for Improvement
 - Walk through true PDSAs and break them down into doable steps
 - Learn how to move from strategies to PDSAs
-

Meet Your Faculty

By Anne Comstock
Project Director

Our Breakthrough Series Collaborative on Safety and Risk Assessments is truly fortunate to have skilled, experienced and passionate co-chairs and faculty to provide support and technical assistance to teams in this critical work. We thought you might enjoy getting to know them a bit better, especially as you are now immersing yourselves in PDSAs and measures. We'll plan to highlight some interesting information about a couple of faculty in each of the coming newsletters. This month, get to know Diane DePanfilis and Shantay Mines just a bit better.



Diane DePanfilis

- Started working in child welfare in the early 1970s
- Has been involved in developing and testing safety and risk assessment instruments
- Has conducted research on the recurrence of child maltreatment
- Has taught child welfare policy, practice and research courses
- Has expertise in evaluating child welfare policies and practice

To learn more about Diane, visit

http://www.ssw.umaryland.edu/faculty_and_research/bios/depanfilis/.

- Was in foster care for four years, from age 14-17, where he was in a foster home, group home, shelter, independent living program and transitional living program
- Currently working for Rutgers University School of Social Work as the youth advisory board/youth engagement reform specialist
- Studied homelessness in Brazil, Ghana, Benin, Togo, Burkina Faso and the United States
- Currently pursuing a Ph.D. in counseling psychology at Seton Hall University
- Is an adoptive/resource parent

To learn more about the Transitions for Youth project at Rutgers, where Shantay works, visit <http://www.transitionsforyouth.org/>.



Shantay Mines

Creating Organizational Change: Tips and learning

From Susan Ault

By Karl Chan-Brown

When Susan Ault, now with CFP Strategic Consulting, became the director of Family and Children's Services in Ramsey County, Minn., she met with the local foster parent association, which presented her with a lengthy and serious list of issues. She was trying to figure out how to accomplish the necessary changes when she learned about the Breakthrough Series Collaborative on Recruiting and Retaining Resource Families. Ramsey County applied to that BSC, beginning a process that led to the integration of PDSAs into everyday practice. While Ault initially thought the BSC would mean extra work for staff, she soon recognized that PDSAs could be used as a way to change practice and even organizational culture. To hear Ault and other senior leaders discuss how these changes occurred and spread throughout – and even beyond – the agency, go to the documents library on the extranet and navigate to BSC Call Agendas and Minutes>Senior Leader Calls> Senior Leader Call Audio 7-28-08.

Learning Session Two: FYI

As teams gear up for learning session two at the Disneyland Hotel in Anaheim, Calif., there are some things you should know:

1. Pre-work assignments will be forthcoming
2. The agenda will be full, but exciting and interactive
3. Continue to test PDSAs throughout this action period, even up to the day you depart for California!

Extranet Highlights

- As of August 1, 19 teams have posted **56** PDSAs
- **Nine** teams have studied their PDSAs

PDSAs by Key Areas of Practice

1. Race/Ethnicity/Culture: **10**
2. Family/Youth Engagement: **26**
3. Tools: **2**
4. Sound Decisions: **2**
5. Integrated and Comprehensive: **1**
6. Permanency and Well-Being: **6**
7. Community Collaboration: **6**
8. Services: **1**
9. Requisite 2--Data: **1**

Discussion Boards

- Discussion boards are wonderful ways to continue a discussion you started on an All Collaborative call or Senior Leader call.
- They foster collaboration and shared learning at all levels.
- Anyone on your team can post a question or start a discussion. Please give it a try before our next All Collaborative call and be prepared to be amazed.

Looking for Contributors

If you have an article you'd like to write or share with members of the BSC, guest columnists are always welcome. Contact:

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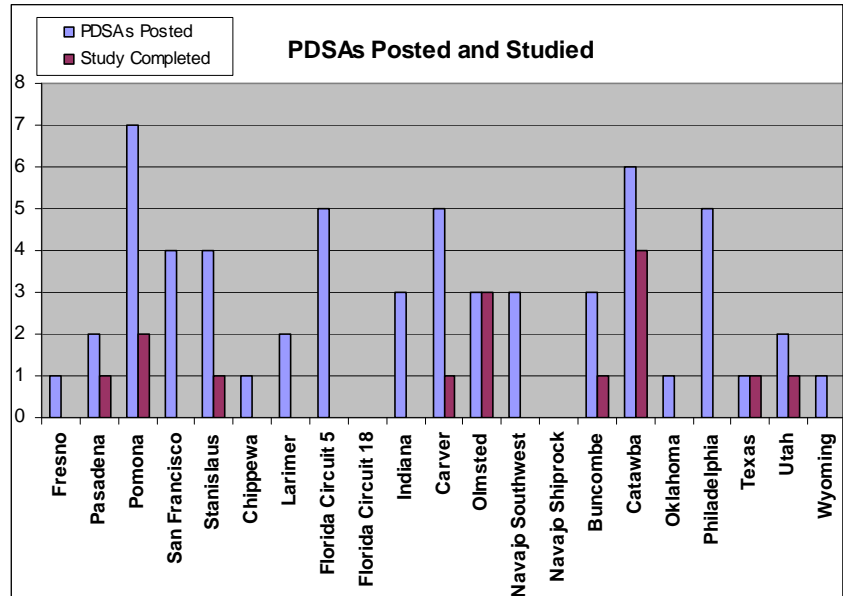
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PDSAs in Plain View



PDSA Checklist

Before starting your next PDSA cycle, consider going through the following checklist to make sure you are actually doing a PDSA.

- ✓ Will this idea or action actually result in a change in practice?
- ✓ Can this idea or action be accomplished quickly, by next Tuesday? (If not, it's probably too big.)
- ✓ Is the idea or action small and specific? (e.g., starting with one worker asking two specific questions)
- ✓ Have we spent time over planning? *Remember*, there is *no* over-planning – only plan as much as you can do.
- ✓ Have we spent time trying to get others to buy into this idea? *Remember*, consensus is not required in order to test your idea.
- ✓ Is this idea or action based on learning from prior cycles?
- ✓ Have we looked at previous learnings from previous cycles can we test something that has not already been tried?
- ✓ Can we replicate this idea or action with multiple workers or multiple families?

PDSA Food for Thought

It is a small test of change that over time will create systematic change, thus improving outcomes in safety and risk assessments and decision making for children and families in the child welfare system.